

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 170

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, KS

SUBJECT: NDP REACTION TO EMERGENCY MEASURES

SUMMARY: NDP MEMBER SAYS HIS PARTY WILL OPPOSE PRESIDENT'S EMERGENCY MEASURES AND CONTINUE TO SEEK CHANGES IN YUSHIN CONSTITUTION. END SUMMARY.

1. NDP ASSEMBLYMAN TOLD EMBOFF JANUARY 9 THAT IN WAKE ISSUANCE EMERGENCY MEASURES NDP PARTY MEMBERS REMAIN UNITED IN THEIR RESOLVE TO OPPOSE CONSTITUTION AND WOULD ALSO TRY TO OPPOSE PRESIDENT'S NEW MEASURES.
2. ACCORDING SOURCE, AT JANUARY 9 MEETING, PARTY LEADERSHIP AGREED TO PRESS FOR RECONVENING NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND FOR DEBATE ON PRESIDENT'S MEASURES.
3. NDP LEADERS HELD LITTLE HOPE THAT THEY COULD MARSHALL ONE THIRD OF MEMBERSHIP NECESSARY TO CONVENE SPECIAL ASSEMBLY SESSION, SINCE GOVERNMENT PARTIES AND "INDEPENDENT" GOVERNMENT SUPPORTERS WERE SURE TO OPPOSE REQUEST. FACT THAT NDP TRIED WOULD BE REPORTED IN PRESS HOWEVER. THIS IN ITSELF WOULD REPRESENT SIGNIFICANT SHOW OF OPPOSITION.

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4. ASSEMBLYMAN SAID NDP PLANNED TO DEMAND FULL DEBATE AND GET

AROUND EMERGENCY MEASURE PROHIBITION AGAINST CRITICISM OF CONSTITUTION BY CITING SECTIONS (3) AND (6) OF CONSTITUTION'S ARTICLE 53 REQUIRING THE PRESIDENT TO NOTIFY THE ASSEMBLY OF EMERGENCY MEASURES AND GIVING A MAJORITY OF ASSEMBLY RIGHT TO RECOMMEND LIFTING OF EMERGENCY MEASURES (PRESIDENT DOES NOT HAVE TO ACCEPT RECOMMENDATION). NDP'S PLOY IS TO POINT OUT THAT RIGHT OF DEBATE ON EMERGENCY MEASURES IS CLEARLY IMPLICIT IN PRESIDENT'S OWN CONSTITUTION.

5. ASKED NOW HE EXPECTED MATTERS TO DEVELOP IN ASSEMBLY, NDP ASSEMBLYMAN PREDICTED FAILURE OF NDP EFFORTS IN A TECHNICAL SENSE BUT SUSTAINED DEVELOPMENT OF OPPOSITION AND ACOALESCING OF THOSE BOTH WITHIN HIS PARTY AND WITHIN OTHER GROUPS OPPOSING PARK GOVERNMENT. WHILE NO ONE AT JAN 9 NDP MEETING HAD DIRECTLY CHALLENGED PRESIDENT'S MEASURES OR PREDICTED OUTRIGHT CONFRONTATION ALL EFFORTS HAD BEEN DIRECTED AT FINDING BEST MEANS PROMOTING ANTI-CONSTITUTION AND ANTI-GOVERNMENT DRIVE. IMMEDIATE DAYS AHEAD HE THOUGHT WOULD BE RELATIVELY QUIET BUT THERE WOULD BE CONSTANT PROBING BY BOTH OPPOSITION AND GOVERNMENT ELEMENTS IN EFFORT TO DEFINE STRENGTH AND DIRECTION OF EACH OTHER'S INTENTIONS.

6. IN MORE PHILOSOPHICAL MOMENTS OF CONVERSATION NDP ASSEMBLYMAN, WHO HAD BEEN AGITATED ABOUT HIS PERSONAL AND HIS PARTY'S FUTURE ONLY DAYS BEFORE, DESCRIBED HIS OWN AND HIS COLLEAGUES FEELINGS AS "COMFORTABLE." HE SAID NDP MEMBERS HAD MADE PEACE WITH THEIR CONSCIENCE BY COMING OUT AGAINST YUSHIN CONSTITUTION. STRESSED PARTY WOULD CONTINUE TO PURSUE GOALS AS INDICATED THROUGH "LEGALISTIC MEANS" AND TO OPERATE "WITHIN THE SYSTEM." BUT MEMBERS WERE NOW TALKING ABOUT INEVITABILITY OF OPEN CONFRONTATION. HE QUOTED PARTY LEADER YU CHIN SAN, OFTEN CONSIDERED GOVERNMENT CAPTIVE, AS EXPRESSING THOUGHT IN BACK OF MANY MINDS WHEN HE SAID AT JAN 9 MEETING " THE TIME FOR TESTING PERSONAL COURAGE IS COMING."

7. COMMENT: NDP IN PAST HAS BEEN NOTABLE FOR ITS CAUTION IN CHALLENGING GOVERNMENT AND PARTY LEADER YU CHIN-SON'S CREDIBILITY AS AN OPPOSITIONIST HAS BEEN QUESTIONED. AT THIS POINT NDP EMPHASIS REMAINS ON "LEGALISM" BUT PARTY BY ITS JAN 8 DECISION TO SUPPORT CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION, APPEARS TO HAVE FINALLY MOVED CLOSER TO NON-PARTY CRITICS OF THE GOVERNMENT. ERICSON  
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## Message Attributes

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